CLAIMS

What is claimed:

1. A football training device for detachably connecting a football player's helmet to said player's shoulder pads and reducing the ability of said player to lower his head while wearing said device, said device comprising:

(a) a length of resilient material adequate to connect the rear portion of said helmet to a rear portion of said shoulder pads; and

(b) a means for detachably connecting said length of resilient material to both said helmet and said shoulder pads.

2. The training device of claim 1, wherein the length of said device is about 16.0 inches (40.6 cm) and wherein the widest portion of said device is about 7.0 inches (17.8 cm).

3. The training device of claim 1, wherein the said device is substantially "T" shaped, having a narrow end and a crossbar portion, and further comprises:

(a) a first attachment member for attaching the narrow end of said device to the back portion of said helmet; and

(b) second and third attachment members on each end of the crossbar portion of said T-shaped device for attaching the crossbar portion of said device to said shoulder pads.

4. The training device of claim 1, wherein said resilient material is plastic, polymer, vinyl, polyurethane, rubber, or combinations thereof.

5. The training device of claim 1, wherein said means for detachably connecting said length of resilient material to both said helmet and said shoulder pads further comprises VELCRO® strips mounted on the rear portion of said helmet and said shoulder pads and on the underside of said training device in locations corresponding to the positioning of said strips on said helmet and said shoulder pads.

6. The training device of claim 1, wherein said means for detachably connecting said length of resilient material to both said helmet and said shoulder pads further comprises a plurality of snaps mounted on the rear portion of said helmet and said shoulder pads and on said training device in locations corresponding to the positioning of said snaps on said helmet and said shoulder pads.

7. The training device of claim 1, wherein said device is packaged in a kit, and where said kit further comprises a means for detachably connecting said length of resilient material to both said helmet and said shoulder pads, and wherein said attachment means further comprises a plurality of VELCRO® strips.

8. The training device of claim 1, wherein said device is packaged in a kit, and where said kit further comprises

(i) a plurality of adhesive templates for properly locating said device on said helmet and said shoulder pads; and

(ii) a means for detachably connecting said length of resilient material to both said helmet and said shoulder pads, and wherein said attachment means further comprises a plurality of snaps.

9. A method for reducing football-related injuries to the cervical area of the spine, comprising the steps of:

(a) securing a first attachment substrate to the rear portion of a football helmet;

(b) securing a second attachment substrate to the rear portion of a pair of shoulder pads;

(c) placing both said helmet and said shoulder pads on a football player;

(d) detachably connecting an adequate length of resilient material to both said first attachment substrate and said second attachment substrate for preventing the forward movement of said football player's head.

10. The method of claim 9, wherein said attachment substrates further comprise strips of VELCRO®.

11. The method of claim 9, wherein said attachment substrates further comprises a plurality of snaps.

12. The method of claim 9, wherein said resilient material is plastic, polymer, vinyl, polyurethane, rubber, or combinations thereof.